



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Scottish Transport Statistics 2025

Summary Transport Statistics

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Introduction

This chapter highlights some of the main findings from Scottish Transport Statistics, the accompanying summary tables provide longer term trends than those included in the individual chapters and include comparisons between Scotland and Great Britain. This publication covers data up until 2023-24.

The content of this chapter

This chapter covers the following topics:

- Overview of travel in Scotland
- Motor vehicles, traffic and road casualties
- Public transport: bus, rail, air and ferry
- Personal travel (e.g. driving, walking and cycling; travel to work and school)
- Cross-border transport
- Environment and emissions

Overview of travel in Scotland

Transport and travel habits in Scotland were profoundly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with restrictions on travel and daily activity in place for large parts of 2020 and some of 2021.

In 2024-25, public transport journeys rose by 2%, with 457 million public transport journeys made by either bus, rail, air, or ferry. This compares with the 446 million public transport journeys recorded in 2023-24.

Bus remained by far the most commonly used form of public transport in 2024-25, with 73% of public transport journeys made by bus, 19% by rail, 6% by air and 2% by ferry.

The number of bus journeys increased by 2% in 2024-25 compared to 2023-24. However, this was 167% higher than pandemic journeys in 2020-21. Prior to this, bus passenger numbers had been following a generally declining trend, dropping by 10% in the ten years leading up to 2019-20.

Rail journeys showed an increase of 4% over the year 2023-24. However, this was 468% higher than the pandemic year 2020-21. In the years immediately prior to the pandemic rail use had been steadily increasing.

Air passengers increased by 8% between 2023 and 2024, but are up by 303% compared with 2020. Air passenger numbers had increased by 28% in the ten years prior to the pandemic. Ferry passenger numbers remained the same in 2024 as the previous year, but were 98% higher compared to 2020.

Road traffic also rose in 2024-25. Overall road traffic increased by 2%, and has now 1% more than pre-pandemic levels. Car traffic increased by 2% in 2024-25 and is now 34% over the pandemic level. Prior to the pandemic, road traffic had been following a steadily increasing trend with total road traffic increasing by 10% in the 10 years up to 2019.

During the pandemic cycling was one of the few transport types to demonstrate an increase in traffic volume. There have been decreases in the years since, and cycling on the road network was estimated to be 7% lower in 2024-25 compared with 2020-21. However, cycling is still 5% higher than the pre-pandemic year 2019-20.

The table below shows changes in the numbers and percentage changes for various forms of transport.

	2019-20	2020-21	2023-24	2024-25	Change over 1 year	Change since 2020-21	Change since 2019-20
Car Traffic (million/veh km)	36678	27,032	35,372	36,111	2%	34%	-1.5
Pedal Cycle Traffic (on-road) (million/veh km)	365	597	403	383	-5%	-36%	4.9
ScotRail Passengers (millions)	96.4	14.9	81.2	84.7	4%	468%	-12.2
Bus Passengers (millions)	361	125	329	334	2%	167%	-7.5
Air Passengers (millions)	28.9	7	26	28.2	8%	303%	-2.3
Ferry Passengers (millions)	10.4	4.9	9.7	9.7	0%	98%	-7.1

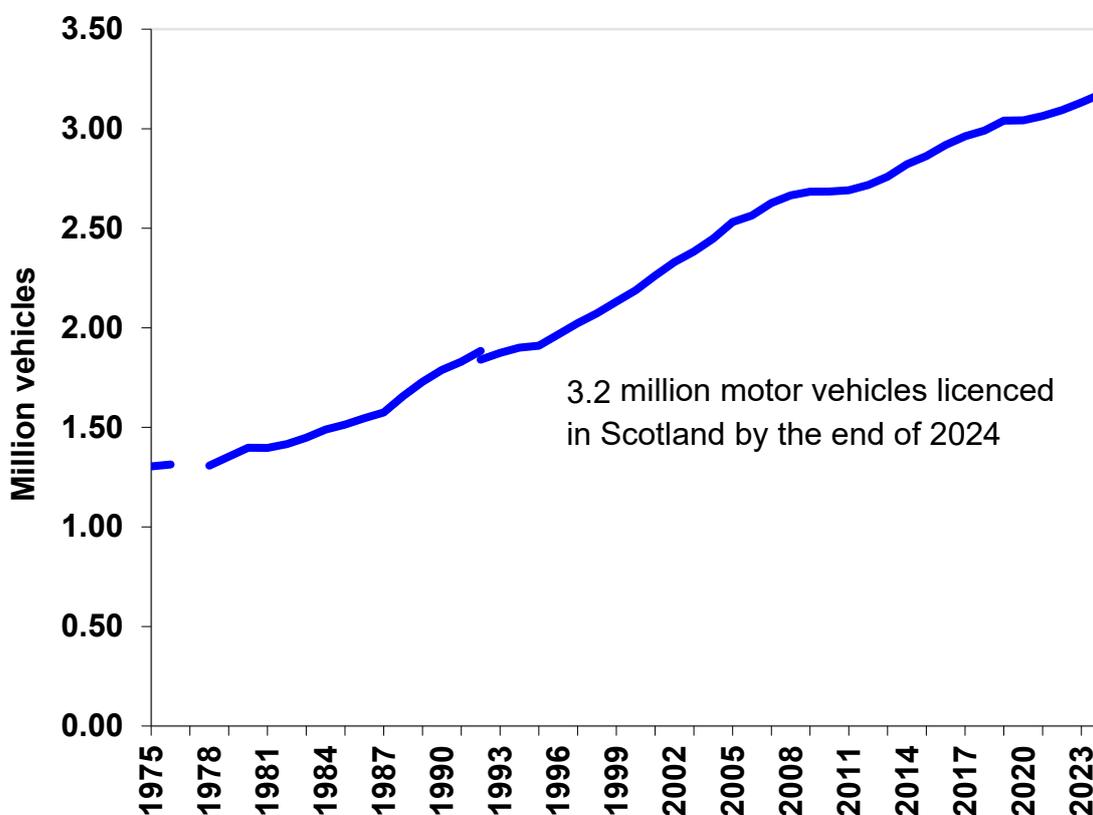
Source: STS 2025, Table S1 except Traffic estimates from table 5.3.

Motor vehicles, traffic and road casualties

Motor vehicles

There were 3.2 million motor vehicles licensed in Scotland in 2024. Having increased slightly from 2023, this is the highest level recorded [Figure 1].

Figure 1: Motor vehicles licensed in Scotland



The total number of vehicles registered in Scotland has been increasing steadily over the longer term. The current total is 12% higher than in 2014 and has more than tripled since 1964.

The number of *new* vehicle registrations in 2024 was 212,000. Whilst this was 3% higher than in 2023, it was still below the figure for 2019 (221,000), which itself was the third successive annual decrease. Taken together, the trends in total vehicles registrations and new vehicle registrations suggests that in recent years people have been buying fewer new vehicles, but retaining existing vehicles for longer.

There were fewer vehicles per person in Scotland than in Great Britain as a whole (57 compared to 60 per hundred population), as has consistently been the case in recent years.

The road network

There were 57,452 kilometres of public road in Scotland in 2024. Seven per cent of this was trunk road, which is managed centrally by Transport Scotland; the remaining roads are the responsibility of Local Authorities.

In Scotland, there was 10.4 kilometres of road per 1,000 people, compared to 5.9 km per 1,000 people in GB as a whole.

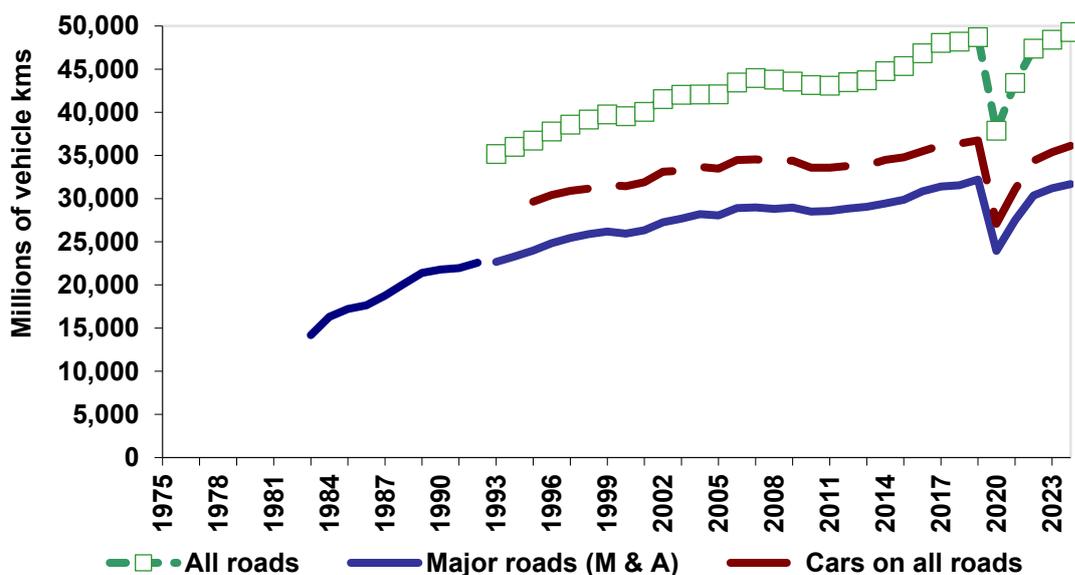
Road traffic

In 2024, 49.3 billion vehicle kilometres were travelled, an increase of 2% compared to the previous year, and 1% more than in 2019.

Prior to the pandemic, the volume of traffic on major roads (Motorways and A roads) had more than doubled since 1983, from an estimated 14,185 million vehicle kilometres to around 32,000 million vehicle kilometres in 2019 [Figure 2].

Car and van users reported that 12% of journeys were delayed due to traffic congestion in 2023.

Figure 2: Traffic in Scotland (million vehicle km)

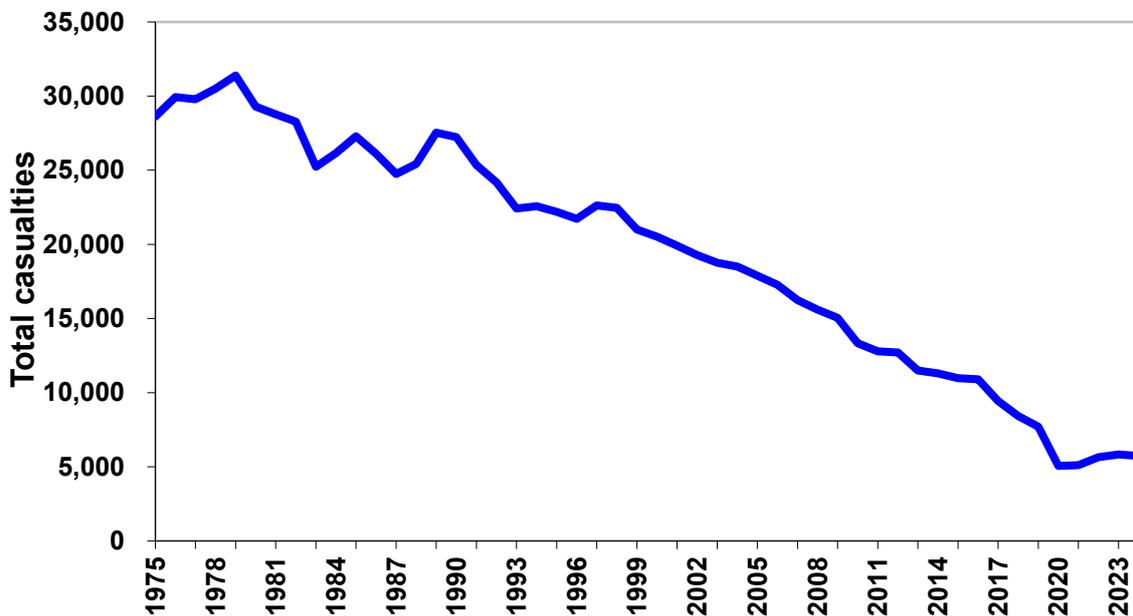


Road casualties

In 2024, 161 people were killed and 1,978 seriously injured in road collisions.

The total number of casualties on Scottish roads rose 2% between 2023 and 2024. These latest figures will have been influenced by the latest increase in traffic. However, prior to the pandemic recorded casualties were declining [Figure 3]. The total number of road casualties decreased by 49% over the last decade. Casualties of all severities have fallen over this period.

Figure 3: Reported road casualties of all severities – including fatal, seriously injured and slightly injured



In Scotland in 2024, for every thousand people in the population, 0.39 were killed or seriously injured in road collisions, compared to 0.44 for Great Britain.

In 2024, car users accounted for three fifths of all casualties (60%), with car casualties increasing by 0.1% and pedestrian casualties falling by 5% in 2024 [

Figure 4].

Figure 4: Road collision casualties by mode of transport

	Share of all road casualties	Yearly change in number of casualties
	60%	+0.1%
	16%	-5%
	8%	-5%
	7%	-2%

Public transport: bus, rail, air and ferry

Local bus and rail services

Bus

Bus travel in Scotland was profoundly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with restrictions on travel and daily activity in place for large parts of 2020 and some of 2021.

In 2024, there were 334 million bus passenger journeys, an increase of 2% on the previous year [Figure 5]. Over one half of all bus journeys in 2024 were made under the National Concessionary Travel scheme. This compares with 38% of journeys in 2019, although in early 2022 the scheme was expanded to include those aged under 22.

Prior to the pandemic, bus passenger journeys had been falling over the longer term. The figures almost halved between 1960 and 1975 and roughly halved again by 2019.

The distance covered by local bus services (expressed in terms of 'vehicle kilometres') can be seen as a measure of bus service provision. Although this was 5% higher in 2024 than 2023, the number of passengers carried rose by 2%.

Rail

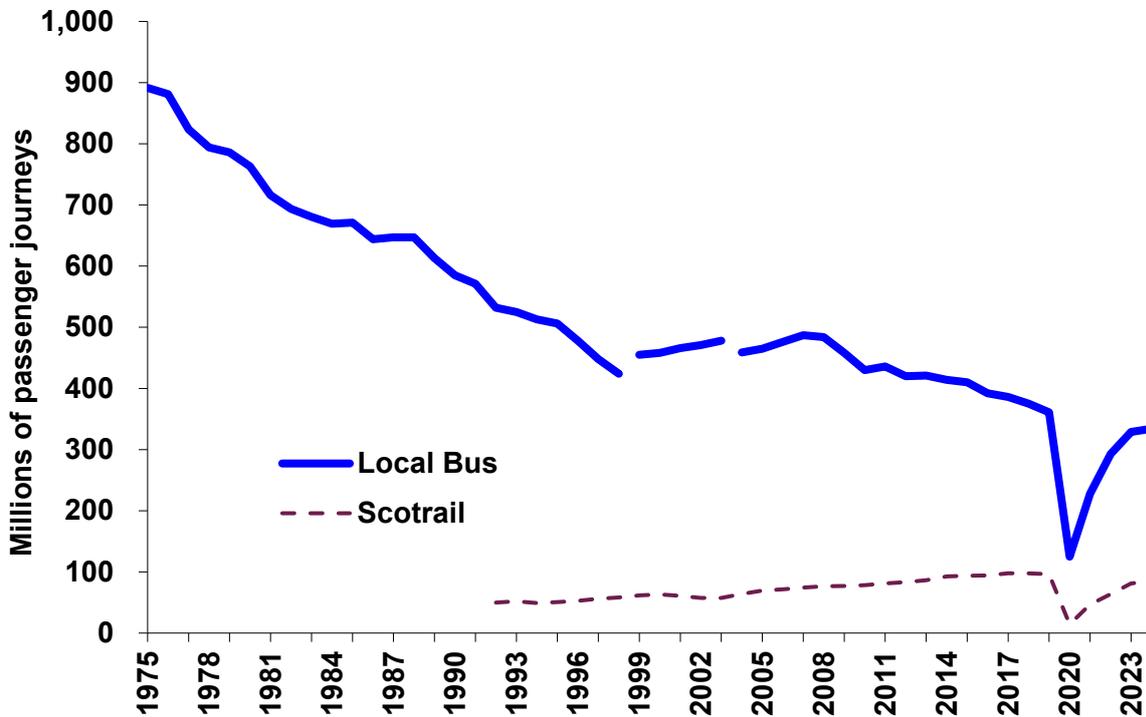
Rail travel in Scotland was profoundly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with restrictions on travel and daily activity in place for large parts of 2020 and some of 2021.

There were 84.7 million ScotRail passenger journeys in 2024-25, an increase of 4% from 2023-24 [Figure 5].

Prior to the pandemic, rail patronage had been rising steadily and but it was 9% lower in 2024-25 compared to 2014-15.

The distance covered by scheduled trains in Scotland rose by 4% in 2024-25 the same as the increase in passenger journeys.

Figure 5: Bus and rail passenger numbers in Scotland



Air and ferry passengers

Air

There were 28 million air terminal passengers in 2024, up 8% compared to the previous year, but 3% lower than in 2019. Prior to the pandemic, air passenger numbers had been increasing over time, with a 28% increase in the ten years up to 2019 [Figure 6].

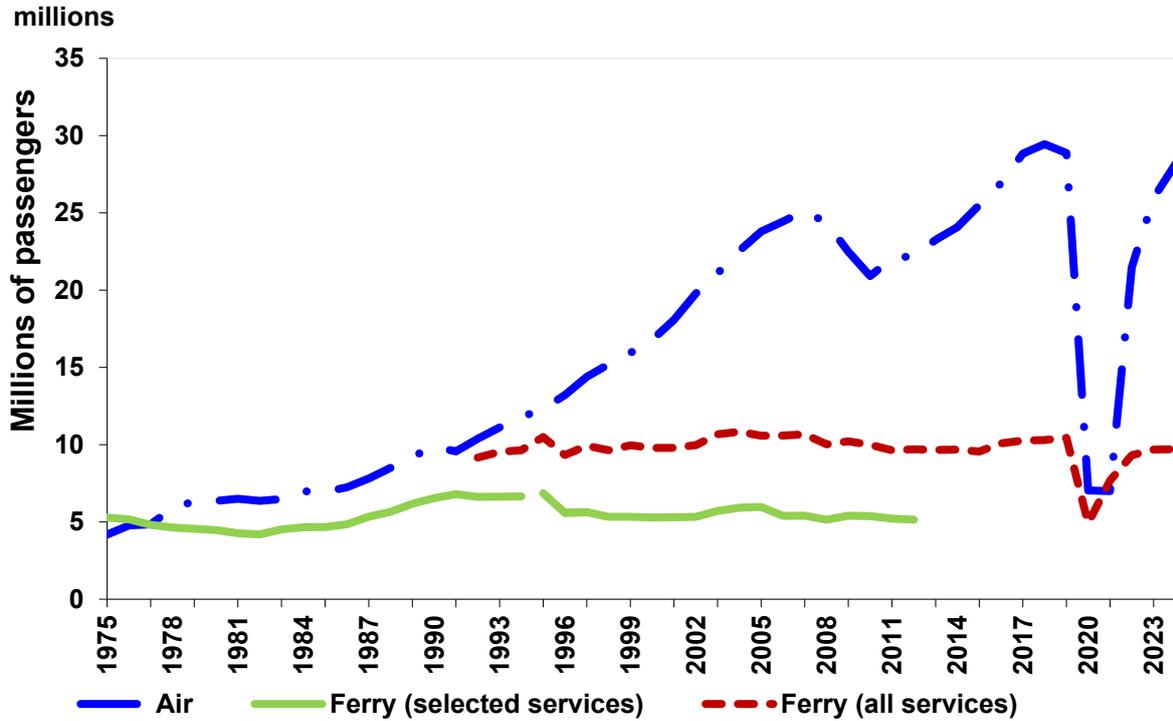
In 2024, 3.8% of all terminal passenger traffic was from within Scotland, 34% was to or from other parts of the UK, 49% was between Scotland and mainland Europe.

Ferry

In 2024, 9.7 million passengers travelled by ferry (including traffic within Scotland and to and from Northern Ireland), a 0.3% increase on the previous year [Figure 6].

Across all ferry routes, 3.5 million vehicles were carried in 2024 (including traffic between Scotland and Northern Ireland and within Scotland), a 3% increase on 2023.

Figure 6: Air and ferry passenger numbers in Scotland



Note: in the above figure, 'selected services' refers to those services for which data is available back to 1975 – Caledonian MacBrayne, P&O Scottish Ferries, Northlink Orkney and Shetland Ferries and Orkney Ferries

Personal travel (e.g. driving, walking and cycling; travel to work and school)

In 2024, 71% of people aged 17 or over had a full driving licence. The proportion of men aged 17+ holding a licence was higher than women (75% compared to 67%).

35% of people drove every day in 2024, with around 73% of households having access to at least one car.

Twenty five per cent of employed people reported that they currently worked from home. This compares with 16% in 2019.

Of those that travelled to work in 2024, 31% of journeys to work were by public or active travel [Figure 7].

Figure 7: Main modes of travel to work and school

Main mode of travel to work 2024:		Main mode of travel to school 2023:	
Car (driver) 	61.6%	Walk 	52.9%
Walk 	11.9%	Car/Van 	24.0%
Bus 	10.1%	Bus 	17.8%
Car(passenger) 	4.5%	Other	2.4%
Rail 	6.4%	Cycle 	1.9%
Cycle 	2.3%	Rail 	1.0%
Other	3.2%		

Sixty four per cent of people were either very or fairly satisfied with public transport in 2024, the same as 2023.

Cross-border transport

As with transport more generally, cross-border transport was significantly affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. In 2024, there were 11 million air and ferry passenger journeys to other parts of the UK, the same as 2023. The majority of these journeys were made by air (10 million).

The most recently available figures for cross-border rail journeys are for 2023. These show 10 million passenger journeys were made to other parts of the UK in 2023.

In 2024, 16.7 million passenger journeys were made to and from other countries by air, an increase of 48% since 2014.

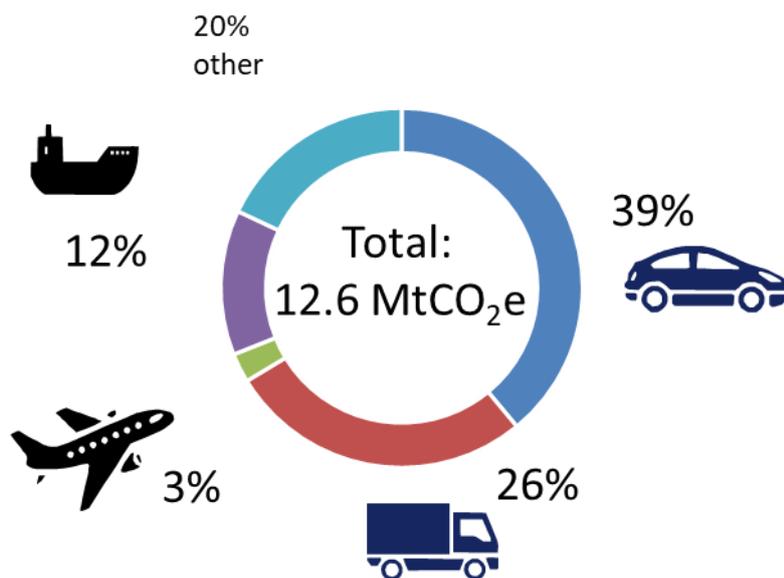
Environment and emissions

The most recently available figures for transport emissions relate to 2022.

Transport accounted for 33.2% of Scotland's total greenhouse gas emissions in 2023. Scotland's transport emissions in 2023 were 1.1% higher than in 2022, and 12.8% lower than in 1990.

In 2023, passenger cars accounted for 39% of transport greenhouse gas emissions **[Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.]**.

Figure 8: Share of greenhouse gas emissions by mode in 2023



Over the longer term, newly registered cars have become more efficient in terms of carbon dioxide emissions, with average CO₂ emissions in Scotland for new car registrations falling by 8% over the last ten years.

At the end of 2024, ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) accounted for 3.8% of vehicles licensed in Scotland, an increase from 2.9% at the end of 2023.

Official Statistics

These statistics are official statistics. Official statistics are statistics that are produced by crown bodies, those acting on behalf of crown bodies, or those specified in statutory orders, as defined in the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#).

Scottish Government statistics are regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

Data and Methodology

Information on the notes, definitions and sources for each of the chapters in the publication can be found in the individual chapter user guides.

Tell us what you think

We are always interested to hear from our users about how our statistics are used, and how they can be improved.

Feedback survey

We'd appreciate it if you would complete our short [feedback survey](#) on this publication.

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